

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 02578 150640Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 ICA-11 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
SS-15 /052 W
-----029278 160619Z /10
R 141405Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7146

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 02578

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: CGEN, SCUL, CPRS, GE, US
SUBJECT: FEININGER PAINTINGS - UPDATE

REFS: (A) BERLIN 759; (B) BERLIN 1600;
(C) BERLIN 1923; (D) BERLIN 2108;
(E) STATE 71985

1. AMBASSADOR AND MEMBERS OF EMBASSY STAFF HAVE
RAISED FEININGER PAINTINGS ISSUE WITH GDR MFA OFFICIALS
ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS INCLUDING WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN
MINISTER GRUNERT ON MARCH 23 (REFTEL D). WE
HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED THE CLARIFICATION WHICH
DCM REQUESTED WHEN NOTE ON MUTUAL RETURN OF
CULTURAL OBJECTS WAS FIRST PRESENTED (REFTEL C).
SINCE RECEIVING THE NOTE WE HAVE TOLD MFA US
DESK OFFICER ELM THAT WE WERE PUZZLED BY THE
SUGGESTION AND HOPED THAT GDR COULD PROVIDE
CLARIFICATION. ELM HAS CLAIMED TO BE UNINFORMED
BUT PROMISED THAT APPROPRIATE EXPERTS WOULD
GIVE EXPLANATION.

2. WE PLAN TO ASK THE MFA AGAIN FOR AN
EXPLANATION OF THIS PROPOSAL ON RETURN OF CULTURAL
OBJECTS. WE WILL TAKE THE LINE IN DISCUSSIONS
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PAGE 02 BERLIN 02578 150640Z

WITH MFA THAT WE CANNOT ACCEPT ANY LINKAGE BETWEEN
THE DISPOSITION OF THE FEININGER PAINTINGS AND OTHER
CULTURAL OBJECTS IN THE US CLAIMED BY THE GDR. WE
WILL STATE THAT THE ISSUES ARE DIFFERENT AND EACH
CASE SHOULD BE TREATED SEPARATELY. WE WOULD
LIKE TO BE ABLE TO REJECT THE GDR NOTE (REFTEL C).
IMMEDIATELY IT BECOMES CLEAR, AS WE BELIEVE

IT WILL, THAT THE GDR HAS IN MIND A PACKAGE DEAL
AND THAT IT WANTS TO CREATE A LINK BETWEEN RELEASE
OF THE FEININGER PAINTINGS AND THE POSITION OF THE
CULTURAL OBJECTS IT LAYS CLAIM TO IN THE US.

3. IN THE MEANTIME, AND PENDING ANY GDR
CLARIFICATIONS ON ITS PROPOSAL, WE WILL CONTINUE TO
PRESS THE GDR TO RELEASE FEININGER PAINTINGS,
KEEPING IN MIND COLIN'S CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLY
FILING A CLAIM BEFORE THE MAY 15 DEADLINE AND FOR
THE PURPOSE OF DEMONSTRATING THAT WE HAVE PRESSED
HIS CASE WITH THE GDR. WE WOULD NOT, HOWEVER,
MAKE THIS POINT TO THE GDR.

4. ACTION REQUESTED. DEPARTMENT'S AUTHORIZATION TO
REJECT MFA NOTE (REFTEL C) AS SUGGESTED PARA. 2.
BOLEN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: CULTURAL PROPERTY, EXHIBITS
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Draft Date: 14 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Disposition History: n/a
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